

Appl. No.  
Amdt. dated February 23, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of September 23, 2003

PATENT

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

**STATUS OF APPLICATION**

Claims 1-15 are pending in this application. Claims 1-7 and 9-10 were amended. Claims 11-15 were added. Support for the new and amended claims can be found in the specification. No new matter has been added.

The abstract was objected to and has been amended to more accurately describe the invention.

Claims 3 and 6 were objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Admitted Prior Art ("APA").

**THE CLAIMS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in light of the amendments to the claims and following remarks.

**Claims 3 and 6**

Examiner states that the phrase "less than or equal to a certain amount" is vague and ambiguous. Claims 3 and 6 have been amended recite "less than a preset amount."

**Claims 1-3**

Applicants submit that the APA does not teach or suggest every feature recited in Applicants' claim 1. For example, claim 1, recites "setting an inspection condition by using chip matrix data and chip size data which are obtained by accessing a design database via communication means" which is not anticipated or suggested by the APA. Nowhere does Figure 1 of Applicants' specification teach or suggest using chip matrix data and chip size data which are obtained by accessing a design database via communication means. Accordingly, claim 1 should be allowable for at least the above reason.

Claims 2-3, which depend on claim 1, should at least be allowable for a similar rationale as claim 1.

Claims 4-6

Claim 4 recites "... extracting related information from a design data obtained by accessing a design database via communication means; ..." The APA does not teach or suggest extracting a design data obtained by accessing design database via communication means. Thus, claim 4 should at least be allowable for this reason.

Claims 5-6, which depend from claim 4, should at least be allowable for a similar rationale.

Claims 7-10

Claim 7 recites "... classifying defects detected at said detecting by using information from a database obtained by accessing said database via communication means; ..." The APA does not teach or suggest classifying defects detected, nor does it teach or suggest accessing a database via communication means. Thus, claim 7 should at least be allowable for these reason.

Claims 8-10, which depend from claim 7, should at least be allowable for a similar rationale.

Claims 11-13

Claim 11 recites "... using design data obtained by accessing a design database via communication means; ..." The APA does not teach or suggest this limitation. Thus, added claim 11 should at least be allowable for this reason.

Claims 12-13, which depend from claim 11, should at least be allowable for a similar rationale.

Claims 14-15

Claim 14 recites "... setting inspection conditions for the semiconductor device using design data obtained by communicating with a design database; ..." The APA does not teach or suggest this limitation. Thus, added claim 14 should at least be allowable for this reason.

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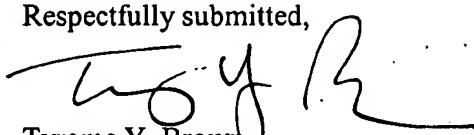
Claim 15, which depends from claim 14, should at least be allowable for a similar rationale as claim 14.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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